The Observer

MORO, OREGON.

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A Blue Mark here will answer an inquery, when entered upon our calendar, giving the date of the paper as the date at which your current subscription expires.

Bits of Byplay

By Luke McLuke

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Mean Brute!

"Mr. Push proposed to me last night, paw-paw," said Miss Gabb, "and he wants your consent to our marriage. He told me that he would die for me if I would accept him."

"How much insurance does he carry?" growled Mr. Gabb.

Aw, Gwan!

What awful topers harbors are,
They surely fear a drouth,
For you can always find a bar
Close by the harbor's mouth.

Paw Knows Everything.

Willie—Paw, what age are we living in?

Paw—The cold storage, my son.

Broke.

In his new auto he would dash,
The blame thing ran into a tree;
And now he's hunting for some cash,
The car is broke and so is he.

The Wise Fool.

"There is nothing more aggravating than to bite into a chestnut and find a worm in it," observed the sage.

"Oh, yes, there is," disputed the fool. "How about biting into a chestnut and finding half a worm in it?"

Why She Blushes.

They tell us of the blushing bride
Who to the altar goes
Adown the aisle of a church
Between the friend filled rows.
There's Billy whom she motored with
And Bob with whom she swam;
There's Jack—she used to golf with him—
And Steve who called her "Lamb."
There's Ted, the football man she owned
And Don of tennis days;
There's Hubert, yes, and blond Eugene,
They took her off to plays.
And there is Harry, high school beau,
With whom she used to mush.
No wonder she's a "blushing bride!"
Ye gods! She ought to blush!

—All Story Weekly.

Correct.

Once upon a time there was a woman who didn't think her kiddies were the prettiest and best behaved in town. Which reminds us of Luke McLuke's saying that all fairy tales begin with "Once upon a time."—Columbia State.

Ain't it the Truth?

A futile thing is human pride;
His virtues man defends,
The while his faults are magnified
By those known as his "friends."

Nothing Doing.

Dear Luke—Can Dr. Akers, the Logan (W. Va.) dentist, pull teeth for the club?—C. R. M.

Honk, Honk!

Railroad crossing,
Speeding car,
Fragments tossing
Gates ajar!

Ossifer, Call the Wagon!

Dear Luke—S. Newt Full of Columbus, O., wants to get into the club. How about it?—H.

Things to Worry About.

A butterfly sleeps with its head downward.

Names is Names.

Spicer Mustard lives at Vanceburg, Ky.

Our Daily Special.

It takes a strong man to keep his face closed.

Luke McLuke Says—

A man can make his conscience shut up when he has done something wrong. But he can't make his wife act that way.

The reason why mother hasn't any time to sew buttons on father's pants is because she has to attend a sewing club almost every day.

Some men seem to spend half of their time trying to get into trouble and the other half trying to get out.

The average society girl is just crazy about hops. But they are not the same kind of hops that some honest workingmen are so fond of.

What has become of the old fashioned broad band of gold that was known as a wedding ring?

A princess is quite proud of her diamond and ruby and emerald rings that came from the ten cent store, but she would regard it as a great insult if she had to wear a thimble.

Some men seem to think that they have to learn a half dozen languages in order to get a hearing in this world. But a woman manages to get along very nicely on just one language.

When a man is trying to cultivate unselfishness he is surprised that he never finds any in the other fellow's garden.

That English scientist who claims that Americans are becoming a nation of physical weaklings evidently never paid a visit to this country and knows nothing about our bull throwers and hammer artists.

We may be grouchy. But if we ever saw anything on the street that looked like one of the young men in the cuts in the ready made clothing advertisements we know we would laff until we busted.

If some men had to work for what their work was worth they would starve to death.

There are a whole lot of married men who would have to go hungry or eat outside if their wives ever lost their can openers.

There are two sides to an argument unless you happen to be mixed up in the argument.

Lost and Found

Story of a Bridegroom With Dramatic Tastes

By CLARISSA MACKIE

When Robert Dwight married Mildred Corson every one said that they would be happy if Dwight did not go on the stage, for which he had a strong leaning. Mildred was very much in love with him, and it was feared that if he was separated from her, to be surrounded by actresses, not only would she be jealous, but he might be tempted to leave her in the lurch.

They were married early in February, intending to go south to meet the summer coming north. A large number of friends saw them joined, pelted them with rice and old shoes, and they were driven to the dock from which they were to sail. On boarding the ship they found their stateroom a mass of flowers sent to them by their friends. In two or three days they found themselves in Jacksonville, Fla.

To Mildred Dwight, who had been a lonely little stenographer when Robert fell in love with and married her, this leisurely life of the well to do was a delightful experience.

Robert Dwight was far from poor, his business was a prosperous one, and there was no economizing during this wedding trip. And, best of all, there was waiting for them in New York a luxuriously furnished apartment which was to be home.

No wonder the Dwights were blissfully happy, and it is not surprising that on this winter morning Mildred looked from her hotel window into a summer land of tropical flowers and singing birds and decided that this was heaven indeed.

Robert had gone out to buy some cigars at a queer little tobacco shop at the end of a crooked street, and when he returned they were going for a long drive under the palms.

Mildred glanced at the clock. Robert had been gone over an hour, and the motorcar was waiting below.

Another hour ticked away and thirty minutes more.

After the manner of brides, Mildred became alarmed over the long absence of her loved one, and, twisting a white chiffon veil over her little hat, she went out to look for him. She know the way to the tobacco shop, and she soon reached the crooked street.

Her heart sank when she saw that down its length were an unusual number of people.

Had anything happened to Robert?

She moved through the crowd, not daring to ask for fear of the answer she might receive, and she had nearly reached the end of the street and the shop when something happened—something that shattered her beautiful bubble of happiness and ended that most blissful of honeymoons.

Mildred saw Robert coming out of the tobacco shop. He paused in the doorway to light a cigarette. How handsome he looked in his well fitting white flannels, with a white hat set back on his dark hair! He tossed the match away and glanced up the street.

His face brightened into radiance; his eyes glowed with excitement and lover's ardor.

Mildred thought he saw her, but he was looking at another woman, a woman who was running down the opposite pavement. Nay, she was only a slight young girl, exquisitely lovely and evidently in deep distress.

As she ran toward Robert he advanced to meet her with outstretched hands. The cigarette he had tossed aside performed a blazing parabola and fell at Mildred's feet. But she did not see it.

Her anguished eyes saw nothing save the glad look in Robert's face and the joy of the girl as she flew into his waiting arms.

"You!" cried Robert.

Mildred saw no more. She fled back along the crooked street with a wildly beating heart and an insane desire to laugh loud.

Did any woman ever have such an odd ending to a honeymoon?

An hour later she left the hotel with her trunks and handbag, and what excuse she made to the clerk I do not know, but there was no message for Robert Dwight when he came home at last to find her gone.

* * * * * * *

Six months later and it was summer time in New England. Mildred Dwight had resumed her maiden name of Mildred Corson and had obtained a responsible position in one of the large manufacturies of a Connecticut city.

As Miss Corson she acceptably filled her position and won her way into the hearts of her fellow clerks. Not one of them knew of the tragedy which had blighted her honeymoon, nor did one of them guess that Mildred had ever been a bride.

She found a pleasant boarding place and congenial friends. In the city were several good theaters and an occasional concert.

Still Mildred was very unhappy. She loved her husband, and, although the newspapers had told her that Robert was making a worldwide search for his vanished bride, she maintained silence toward those who had known her in the past.

There came a Saturday in August with its customary half holiday from work. Mildred had spent a quiet afternoon in her own room, and after the evening meal one of her new acquaintances, Cora Fields, came with an invitation to attend one of the open air moving picture theaters.

Mildred rather liked the silent drama, so, clad in dainty white gowns, the two girls entered the inclosure and found seats near the front.

Overhead the stars were shining, and outside the inclosure was the hum of city street traffic. The orchestra was unusually good, and Mildred found herself strangely stirred when the violins drifted into McDowell's beautiful "To a Wild Rose."

The orchestra had played the melody during their first meal in that Florida hotel, and it brought back painful memories of her brief spell of happiness.

Then the title of the play was flashed on the screen.

"Lost and Found."

With the first picture came a realizing sense of looking upon familiar scenes. Surely, surely this was the sunny south and the quaint streets those of Jacksonville.

And the girl!

Mildred almost arose from her seat and cried out with surprise as she recognized the lovely face of the heroine as that of the woman who had flown to Robert's arms. So Robert's sweetheart was an actress!

One scene after another flashed before her vision, melting into a whole, which brought her, trembling and incredulous, to the moment when she found herself gazing down the crooked little street of the tobacco shop.

Then she saw her own slender figure and white veiled face looking toward the shop from which her husband, Robert, was emerging, lighting a cigarette. The entire scene was repeated, incident for incident. He tossed away the match, glanced up the street, became eager, alert, tenderly smiling, flung away his cigarette and advanced with outstretched arms to meet the heroine's graceful flying form.

Robert in the moving picture! Why, how had it happened?

All the way home she was asking herself the question, and through the darkness of her perplexity and doubt came one ray of light. During his college days Robert had been one of the college players and was considered a talented amateur actor.

"I am glad he married the girl," sighed Cora as they reached Mildred's door.

"Yes," said Mildred absently, "but he was married before that."

"Who was married before?" asked Cora, puzzled.

"Why, Robert, of course."

"But there was no Robert. His name was Arthur."

"I am stupid tonight," was Mildred's only explanation as she parted from her friend.

The next day Mildred obtained leave of absence and in her straightforward way went directly to New York and called at her husband's office.

She was trembling like a leaf when she was shown into Robert's private office.

He stared at her as one looks at the newly risen dead. His face was thin and worn and his brown hair sprinkled with gray.

"Robert!" she said meekly and then promptly fainted away. When she opened her eyes she was lying on the leather couch, and Robert was on his knees bending over her. His eyes were tender and anxious.

"Can you ever forgive me?" was her first cry.

"Yes, dearest," he said generously. "But tell me what happened to send you away from me that day? I have searched land and sea for you, and I had given you up for dead when you appeared before me."

In a few broken sentences Mildred told her husband of her surprise and jealousy that day in Jacksonville and how when she was assured of his perfidy she had taken a train for the north and disappeared. Then the motion picture play on the screen had thrown a ray of light on the matter.

Robert's explanation made that ray a brilliant light of understanding which cleared up the mystery which had parted bride and groom for almost a year.

"You remember I told you I always acted in our college theatricals," he reminded her, "and many of my friends had urged me to enter the profession. But I did not seriously consider it and only now and then hankered to tread the stage.

"But that morning in Jacksonville I started down to the tobacco shop with only one thought in my mind—to get back to you. As I turned into the street I met my old friend of college days, Jack Budlong, president of our Players' club. He was glad to see me and tearing his hair insanely over the fact that his star performer had come down with the measles that very morning.

"Budlong fell upon me like a long lost brother and pleaded with me to take the part of the measled one. So I did, and when I reached the hotel, full of my experiences and with Miss Gray and Budlong accompanying me to meet the only woman in the world, why, my wife had vanished without a word. So you believed that I was false to you?"

Mildred's punishment had been great, indeed, and she humbly acknowledged her lack of faith. "But how was I to know?" she asked pitifully.

Robert smiled wisely.

"In great love there is no faltering of faith," he gently reminded her as he drew her face to his shoulder. "As the man in the play lost and found his sweetheart, so I lost my wife and have found her"—

"With a greater love for you and unwavering faith," finished Mildred.

The Sickly Golf Players.

A golf player who had been badly beaten by his opponent explained to him that he had been suffering all day from neuritis. "It's a curious thing," replied his opponent, "but I've never beaten a man in perfect health in my life."

It is a great misfortune not to have enough wit to speak well or not enough judgment to keep silent.—La Bruyere.

Just the Man.

First Artist—Well, old chap, how is business? Second Artist—Oh, splendid! Got a commission this morning from a millionaire. Wants his wife and children painted very badly. First Artist—Well, you're the very man to do that.—Exchange

Rather.

"I don't believe the woman who has the next apartment to ours ever touches her parlor carpet."

"My dear, that's a sweeping arraignment."—Baltimore American.

It is better to believe that a man does possess good qualities than to assert that he does not.—Chinese Maxim.

ON A HOT NIGHT

Strange Episode In the Life of a Friendless Man

By HAROLD TITUS

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Even the bugs seemed to have deserted the dock, for only a few of them fluttered about in the blue of the arc light that stood alone in the thick, hot darkness of the river front. Except for the throb of the city, the sounds were few and distant.

From upstream came an excursion boat, the distorted reflection of its yellow lights spreading far across the sullen, oily water. The orchestra was playing mechanically, the cornet a trifle sharp, and the music seemed hollow and lifeless in the heavy night.

That died out. A short series of sluggish swells washed under the dock, sloshing heavily among the timbers.

In the shadow of a pile of boards sat a man, knees drawn far up toward his chin, and head bent forward.

Last night he had slept on a park bench. It had been hot in the park; the many there were restless, and his sleep had been unsatisfying. When he awakened in the sticky, cloudy dawn, he had been more exhausted than he was when he claimed the bench for a bed.

He had felt like crying for many days—ever since the terrific heat set in. Perhaps it was because there was no place to go. Ordinarily he could go to his room, but now it was hotter there than on the streets. To go to the rooming house would be unalloyed discomfort, for there was no real reason to take him in that direction.

Years ago he used to hurry to the place in the evening to look over the mail which was dumped on the table with the stained top which stood in the narrow hall. None came for him, so he gave it up. He had not thought of mail for months.

Every second Sunday morning he paid his room rent. The woman took it with grunted thanks. She never spoke even that much at other times. No, nothing there but heat now, keeping him away from the only thing that was his, so he sensed loneliness more clearly than ever and felt like crying.

Ordinarily it was cool in the receiving department of the wholesale fruit house where he worked, but the heat had permeated even there, and it was not pleasant to handle the light cases of berries. He thought that he might sleep there one night to find relief. The boss looked at him strangely when he asked the favor and then shook his head.

He liked this dock. It was as lonely and deserted at night as he was. He had been there before—the previous summer, when it was hot. It was cool

THE WOMAN TURNED AROUND, CLUTCHING SOMETHING WHITE IN HER HAND.

there then, but it was not cool this time. The river seemed to make it worse.

Still, he was alone, and that was better than being one of many crowded together in a park. While he yearned for companionship, in somewhat of a subconscious way, he liked being alone. He could think then, think about his room and his job and his landlady.

Then he thought of the stuffy little picture show near his rooming house, and he felt guilty as the memory of those squandered nickels welled up within him. He could not understand some of the pictures, but others interested him, and he would sit through an entire evening watching the mimic drama repeated.

One picture he remembered above all others. It depicted the happenings in the life of a boy strange to the city—not so much because this boy hero of the picture screen met misfortune did it interest him, but rather because when the young fellow wandered along the streets he was alone, when he gawped at the sights he was alone, when he met with trouble he was alone and finally when he wandered out on to the great bridge, climbed the railing and disappeared he was alone.

A strange sympathy went out for the film boy. It might have been self pity that prompted it. Anyhow whenever he thought of that sordid, unconvincing little tragedy he felt like crying. He thought of it now as he sat there in the shadow of the shingle pile.

Funny, he thought, that the nights in the pictures were always blue. He had never seen a blue night. They were black and, it seemed now, always hot and thick. This night was.

He brushed a tear away impatiently. What had happened to that boy after he disappeared over the bridge railing? Hot and white was the thought. He was wandering into fields of speculation and conjecture now. It was something new, and he drew a deep breath at the fresh sensation.

The stunted, cramped little circle of thought that had been his since thought began was broken. This was new; this was the treading of pathless fields. Why, he had never before experienced this juggling with views and ideas and impressions.

Before—the boy had merely gone over the rail, out of sight. But now—well, there was something beyond that immediate fact and, furthermore, he was free to establish that something for himself. Bridges crossed rivers, and to leap from one would be to fall into the water.

He had heard of people killing themselves by drowning. That was it, was it? And the tears came freely. The picture was completed now; the film boy was dead—forever dead. He had been alone, but now he was dead!

Another new something stole through him and he arose and walked to the edge of the dock, standing with his turned up stockinged toes out over the last plank.

The snaky water writhed beneath him, silently, and he saw it, all distorted, through the wetness which covered his vision.

So the boy was dead. He wondered how it seemed to be dead. Did people laugh? Perhaps, but you could not hear. Were you always alone? Yes, but you did not realize the condition. The drawing of such conclusions startled him.

The river reached up yearningly.

At least, it was cool. It beckoned him silently, he thought. Anyhow, it was so much trouble to find out about things. He might never be able to get to that island park after all; might never know how much it cost to hide on the excursion boat.

His watch was gone, and that was bad—no place to go—men laughed and lied—he was afraid—the boy in the picture—alone—the river—river, river. It mocked at his hesitation, and he determined that he was not afraid—still it dared him and—

A scuff of a shoe on the rough planks behind set his heart bounding.

So many things were happening this night. He turned, still in the shadow of the boards, and looked.

Under an arc light stood a woman. She was taking off a tawdry hat with a drooping, disconsolate feather, like limp celery. She shook her head slowly as she dropped the thing and wearily lifted a sodden mass of hair with the backs of her fingers.

Then she leaned against the lamppost and looked down at the river. The man stood breathless. He thought he saw her shudder once; then the quick rise and fall of her thin shoulders became evident. She made a peculiar sound.

He did not know what to do. For an unknown reason he was afraid, so he stood still. The woman turned around, clutching something white in one hand, probably a handkerchief. This she pressed tightly against her lips as she gazed shoreward.

The piercing arc rays fell on her strained face. It was dead white, and the forehead was deeply marked. The black eyebrows seemed of an unnatural intensity against the lifeless skin. She was crying now, loudly, the sobs unrestrained and growing louder all the time.

Her whole body shook, and for a moment it seemed as though her knees would give way, but she clutched the lamppost, steadied herself and then, with head thrown far back, moved jerkily about until she faced the stream.

It was not to jump. She seemed to wilt suddenly and tumble off the dock into the water.

For a scant instant he stood there, clammy cold, and then, with a frightened yell, he ran to the place from where she had disappeared.

"Hold on!" he cried, leaning far forward to catch sight of her as she came to the surface. "I'll git you out! Where's somethin'? What'll I git?"

In the excitement his voice was more like a cackle than the articulation of words. He looked vacantly about, saw the boards, ran to them, grasped one of them, and threw it aimlessly into the stream. He saw her face, covered with dripping hair, as it stared at him and went below the surface a second time.

"Help!" he screamed. "Help! What'll I do?"

And in answer to his own query pulled off his coat and sprang into the stream. He came up with a throat filled with water and sputtered as he paddled carefully, straining his eyes to see where the woman might be.

He lost sense of direction in spite of the light on the dock and went too far toward the middle of the river. Realizing his error, he floundered back again.

Soon his hand came in contact with something stringy and clutched it. It was the woman's hair. He pulled himself toward her and felt something strike his knee as though she had attempted to kick him. A hand came out of the water and struck him in the face.

"Fool!" choked the woman as her head came above the surface. "Fool, fool!" And she struck him again.

His fingers were twined in her clothing, and he clung to that hold desperately, his head submerged half the time from the struggle. He felt her foot against his stomach, pressing hard, as though to pull away from him, and he could not understand.

"Take holt!" he said, wondering at his own calm. "Take holt o' my shoulders. Don't be scairt. I'll git you out."

"Let go!" she snarled between quick breaths. "Let go!"

He answered her only by repeated yells for help. Whenever it was possible for their eyes to meet he saw in hers a horrid rage. Always she tried to strike him. But he clung to her and yelled.

Their struggles had worked them in toward the dock. He kicked against a slippery pile, threw up a free arm and grasped a stringer. Pulling himself up so that his head and neck were out of water, he slipped the other arm around her and held her close.

She tried to wriggle from his clutch, but former efforts had taken her strength, and soon she was still, with one hand resting on his shoulder.

His cries had sounded dead to him at first, and now that they were in the shadow of the dock, they seemed to be

"HELLO—DOWN THERE!" CALLED A VOICE.

hollow, reverberating and ineffectual, but he kept them up until he was forced to stop for breath.

Then he heard feet pounding on the planks above. They came rapidly to the edge of the dock. There was a sound of labored breathing and a thump as though some one had dropped to his knees to see better into the darkness.

"Hello—down there!" called a voice.

"Help!" replied the man.

A moment of silence and inactivity. Then a match flared, held high above a policeman's helmet.

"Can you hold out?" he demanded, catching sight of the two heads.

"Help!" was the reply from the water.

The woman was crying.

"Hold on—I'll get a rope!" and the feet above moved away hurriedly.

In a moment they came back and a rope dangled in the water.

"Wait a minute," muttered the man, slipping the hemp beneath the woman's arms. "Now you hold on tight, an' we'll git you out. Hang on tight, now."

Mechanically she obeyed, and was dragged slowly to the dock. In another instant the man was being lifted from the water.

They stood there under the arc light, the three of them, while a little knot of men came from somewhere—anywhere.

"Ah-ha, Nelly!" jeered the officer. "Drunk again, eh? Drunk again an' fell off th' dock, is it?"

The woman was fussing with her bedraggled hair.

"No, 'tain't, Riley," she sniffed. "Yuh know well I ain't ben drinkin.' I'm"—

A spasmodic sob cut her short.

"You're what?"

"I'm tired o' th' bull thing, that's all."

The policeman buttoned his coat slowly.

"So that's it, eh? Goin' th' river route, was yuh? Well, old girl, we'll jist put the kibosh on that fer awhile."

And, taking her by the arm, they walked away out of the little group that stood and watched, saying nothing.

"By gosh, she tried to drowned herself, an' yuh got her out," muttered one, looking at the dripping man.

"Huh?"

"I said she tried to drowned herself, an' you saved her."

The man stared hard for a moment at the speaker, and then the light of realization spread over his face.

"Did she?" he asked.

Some one in the knot sniggered.

"'Course she did," blustered the speaker. "Didn't you pull her out?"

"Yes—sure thing—'course I pulled her out. Tried to kill herself, eh? Doggone ef she didn't!"

"Might's well," muttered another. "She ain't no 'count."

"Ah, I dunno; folks aint got no right to kill 'emselves," said some one else.

One walked away and another lighted a cigarette.

"Mebby," said the man, using his newly discovered ability of speculation—"mebby she was—was"—

And he broke off with a sneeze.

"Gosh, guess I'd better git on my coat 'er I'm like to catch cold an' die too."

He hurried away to the place where he had dropped the garment.

Gam's Dry Humor.

When the gallant Welsh captain, David Gam, was sent forward by Henry V. to reconnoiter the French army before the battle of Agincourt he found that the enemy outnumbered the English by about five to one. His report to the king is historic:

"There are enough to be killed, enough to be taken prisoners and enough to run away."

This quaint forecast of the result of the battle at once spread through the camp, and doubtless every yeoman archer of the valiant company felt an inch taller. We know that it was almost literally justified by the event. Poor Gam's dry humor was equaled by his courage. He was killed while in the act of saving the life of his prince.—London Standard.

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